

City of Santa Clara

Pursuit Policy Update

Santa Clara PD



**City of
Santa Clara**
The Center of What's Possible

Why are we here?

- The purpose of this training is to ensure all personnel are aware of and in compliance with the department policy regarding vehicle pursuits.
- Covered aspects include:
 - When to initiate a pursuit
 - Number of Units in a pursuit
 - Communications
 - Supervisory Responsibilities
 - Driving Tactics
 - Blocking, Boxing, Ramming, etc
 - Speed Considerations
 - Air Support
 - Termination
 - Capture of the Suspect
 - Interjurisdictional Considerations

When do we pursue?

- Generally, we do NOT pursue for infractions and misdemeanors
 - Exception: When the misdemeanor is one involving deadly weapons and the suspect poses an immediate risk to public safety, INDEPENDENT from the risk posed by the pursuit.
 - In rare cases, the violator may fail to yield but still obey ALL other rules of the road. THIS IS A PURSUIT, however it is permissible as long as the violator continues obeying rules of the road, and both the pursuing officer and the supervisor must continue to weigh the risk against the need to apprehend the violator. If the violator begins evading using high speed or violating the rules of the road, the pursuit must be justified based on a violent crime, a crime involving deadly weapons, and the need to apprehend the suspect.

But When Do We Pursue?

- Violent Crimes;
- Threatened use or possession of a deadly weapon;
- Other unusual circumstance that presents an immediate and significant risk to the public.
- THAT'S IT.
 - The policy is pretty clear here and does not provide any other discretionary reasons to initiate or continue a pursuit.

Conduct of the Pursuit:

Number of Units

- Generally: 2 + Supervisor
- Marked units take precedent, four wheels takes precedent over two wheels, fully marked takes precedent over slick top
- CAN have more, if requested based upon the circumstances
- If you're not in the pursuit, **STAY OUT OF THE PURSUIT.**
- Units not in the pursuit can proceed to the termination point while following all rules of the road.

Conduct of the Pursuit:

Communications

- Location, Direction of Travel, Estimated speeds
- Suspect vehicle description, including plate
- Reason for pursuit
- Known or suspected weapons. Threat of force, violence, injuries, hostages, or other unusual hazards
- Number of occupants, identity or description
- Weather, road, and traffic conditions
- Any additional resources needed
- Any other agencies involved in the pursuit
- No or slow to provide the info = Cancelled pursuit. Don't be that guy/girl.

Conduct of the Pursuit:

Supervisory Responsibilities

- Primary responsibility is the supervisor of the officer initiating the pursuit.
- Acknowledge the pursuit, determine info needed to assess the risk factors
- Get in the pursuit if appropriate to provide SUPERVISION
- Exercise control, even if not IN the pursuit, CANCEL if appropriate
- Notify Watch Commander, Coordinate/Notify outside agencies
- Request additional resources (air/canine/etc) as needed
- Post-Pursuit: Conduct review and complete pursuit documentation.

Conduct of the Pursuit:

Driving Tactics

- Drive within the limits and abilities of you and your vehicle.
- Unit not involved in the pursuit MAY proceed ahead to intersections to warn cross traffic.
- DO NOT pursue a wrong way vehicle, but if you do:
 - Request Air
 - Parallel it on the correct side of the roadway
 - Get additional units to monitor exits available to the wrong way violator
- Notify CHP or other agencies if the pursuit is entering their jurisdiction
- DO NOT pass each other unless its requested and there is a clear understanding of what's happening among the involved vehicles.

Conduct of the Pursuit:

Pursuit Intervention

- “Whenever practicable, an officer shall seek approval from a supervisor before employing any intervention to stop the pursued vehicle.” 307.8
- Shooting at a vehicle should only be done when there is not other reasonable means to avert a lethal threat.
- INTERVENTION IS DANGEROUS, to YOU and EVERYONE else.
- Blocking: Only if you’ve been trained
- Ramming: Only with supervisor approval, ONLY when deadly force would otherwise be authorized, AND all other reasonable alternatives have failed or would not work.

Conduct of the Pursuit:

Pursuit Intervention

- Boxing: ONLY if you've been trained and have supervisor approval.
- Tire Deflation (spike strips): ONLY if you've been trained and have supervisor approval. Should NOT be used when the pursued vehicle is a motorcycle, transporting hazardous materials, or a school bus transporting children, except in extraordinary circumstances.
 - Spike Strips pose a HUGE hazard to the deploying officer, this needs to be communicated clearly to all involved in the pursuit.
- Roadblocks: ONLY if trained and have supervisor approval
- IN ALL CASES: ONLY if the need to immediately stop the vehicle outweighs the risk of injury or death (to you, suspects, and general public), it reasonably appears IT WILL WORK, and reasonable alternatives have failed or would not reasonably be effective.

Conduct of the Pursuit:

Speed Considerations

- Evaluation of the speeds of the pursuit should be continuous
- Consider terminating when:
 - Speeds are unsafe for the conditions
 - Speeds exceed your ability. This is a difficult self-assessment to make in the moment, but is critical. If you're scaring yourself, it's too fast. If your speeds should scare you but don't, you're definitely driving beyond your abilities.
 - Speeds exceed your vehicle's abilities. This isn't just your vehicle's ability to reach said speeds, but rather includes its ability to maneuver and stop at those speeds.

Conduct of the Pursuit:

Air Support

- When available, you should request air support.
- The air unit is in control of the pursuit once it acquires the suspect vehicle
- Consider how closely you need to be once air support is on station
- Air Unit coordinates the resources on the ground, reports the progress of the pursuit, and provides updates on conditions.

Conduct of the Pursuit:

Termination

- All pursuits end one of three ways
 - We catch the suspect
 - We turn over the pursuit to another agency
 - We terminate the pursuit
- Pursuits represent a significant risk to ourselves and the public; Your job is to balance that risk against the need to apprehend the suspect.
 - This is continuous
 - This is the responsibility of ALL involved in the pursuit, including the primary officer AND the supervisor. Just because your supervisor didn't call off the pursuit doesn't mean you shouldn't.

Conduct of the Pursuit:

Termination (cont'd)

- Per Policy, considerations for terminating a pursuit:
 - There is so much distance between pursuing units and the suspect that the suspect has essentially already gotten away. Don't keep going just because you're already driving fast.
 - The pursued vehicle's location is no longer known. They got away, it's over.
 - Your car sustains damage that makes it unsafe to drive.
 - Your lights or siren aren't working.
 - The risk to the public are greater than the hazard posed by the suspect.
 - Suspect identity is known. We can catch him/her/they/them another day.

Conduct of the Pursuit:

Termination (cont'd)

- How do we terminate?
 - Advise you are terminating the pursuit.
 - Turn off your lights and siren.
 - STOP CHASING THEM.
 - Do not trail, follow, or “maintain visual.” It just sounds like you’re continuing to pursue.
 - Reduce your speed, obey all rules of the road.
 - **STOP CHASING THEM**
 - If you can still see the suspect vehicle, provide updates, but do not continue to follow them.
 - **STOP CHASING THEM**

Conduct of the Pursuit:

Capture of the Suspect

- Use of Force Policy
- Be smart, your adrenaline is flowing, don't put yourself in a bad position in an effort to finally end the chase.

Conduct of the Pursuit:

Interjurisdictional Issues

- Outside Agency Assumes our pursuit
 - Taking into consideration distance, familiarity with the area and any other relevant information, pursuits that have gone into another jurisdiction may be turned over to that jurisdiction.
 - We will remain in control of the pursuit until the outside agency assumes the pursuit, at which point our officers will terminate their involvement.
 - With supervisor approval, involved officers may proceed to the termination point.

Conduct of the Pursuit: Interjurisdictional Issues

- Assuming another agency's pursuit
 - We don't join pursuits unless specifically requested. EXCEPTION: A supervisor may authorize units to join a pursuit if the outside agency only has a single unit in the pursuit.
 - Watch commander will review request to take over a pursuit and approve, or disapprove the request.
 - In considering requests, the supervisor should consider:
 - The public's safety in our jurisdiction
 - Safety of the pursuing officers
 - If the circumstances are serious enough to continue the pursuit
 - Adequate staffing and the ability to maintain the pursuit.
- **OUR ASSISTANCE ENDS AT THE CITY LIMITS.**

